

WTHA  
United States Department of State

Washington, D. C. 20520

AUG 16 2002

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Dear Senator Grassley:

This in response to your July 13 letter written on behalf of your constituent, [redacted] had written to you to express her concerns regarding the April events in Venezuela that led to the departure and subsequent return to office of President Chávez. B6

The United States has consistently urged a path of reconciliation and democratic dialogue in Venezuela in our meetings with Venezuelan Government officials as well as with the opposition. As the events were unfolding on April 12, we expressed our hopes that all parties would act with restraint and show the full respect for the peaceful expression of political opinion and urged that the situation be resolved peacefully and democratically by the Venezuelan people in accord with the principles of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

The United States, independently and through the Organization of American States (OAS), condemned the alteration of the constitutional order that occurred on April 11. We also welcomed the restoration of that constitutional order and President Chávez's return as the elected president of Venezuela. Our diplomatic efforts following the events of April 11 were focused on restoring constitutional order and helping to avoid any further violence or bloodshed.

The United States is committed to democratic and constitutional governments in this hemisphere and around the globe. We did not participate in or condone the unconstitutional actions taken by those who attempted to depose President Chávez. The United States' opposition to coups of any kind to effect regime change in Venezuela has been a consistent U.S. position that has transcended administrations.

The Honorable

Charles E. Grassley,  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN L. MILLS  
DATE/CASE ID: 25 APR 2005 200400109

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